

Claims.

1. (currently amended) Butt-joining method comprising:  
 In two abutting metal strips punching a substantially rectangular slot into both abutments,  
 inserting into said two slots a deformable slug, clinching ~~it~~ said slug into said slots,  
 5 thereby securely joining said strips.
2. (original) Butt-joining method as defined in claim 1 wherein said slots  
 in both said abutments are keystone shaped instead of rectangular.
3. (original) Butt-joining method as defined in claim 1 wherein said slots  
 in both said abutments have two rounded edges produced by both a punch and a die.
- 10 4. (currently amended) Butt-joining method as defined in claim 1 wherein said strips  
 are of other material ~~then~~ than metal.
5. (original) Butt-joining method as defined in claim 1 wherein a plurality of slots are used.
6. (currently amended) Butt-joining method as defined in claim 2 wherein  
 said keystone shaped ~~slugs~~ slots ~~are also having~~ have said two rounded corners edges  
 15 produced by both a punch and a die.
7. (currently amended) Butt-joining clinch method comprising:  
 In two abutting metal strips punching a substantially rectangular slot into both abutments,  
 using one knock-out-slug from said punching, re-inserting said slug into the center  
 of said abutment, clinching ~~it~~ said slug into said slots thereby securely joining said strips.
- 20 8. (original) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 7 wherein said slots  
 in both said abutments is keystone shaped instead of rectangular.
9. (original) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 7 wherein said slots  
 in both said abutments have two rounded edges produced by both a punch and a die.
10. (currently amended) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 7 wherein said  
 25 strips are of other material ~~then~~ than metal.

11. (original) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 7 wherein  
a plurality of slots is used.
12. (currently amended) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 7 wherein  
~~said~~ clinching height produced by said clinching is flush or slightly below  
5 the surface of said strips.
13. (new) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 7 wherein  
said metal strips are mitered at 45 degrees and abutting at said mitering,  
with four said mitered strips forming a frame.
14. (new) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 13 wherein  
10 during said mitering remnants of said metal strips is purposely left in the mitered corner.